DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 212 412 RC 013 144

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TITLE Development Education and Multi-Ethnic Education: Some Tensions. Development Education Paper No. 21.
INSTITUTION United Nations Children's Fund, New York, N.Y.
PUB DATE 81
NOTE 16p.; For related documents, see RC 013 135-143. Tables and bibliography may not reproduce clearly due to small print size.
AVAILABLE FROM UNICEF, 866 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10706.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Cultural Awareness; Developed Nations; Developing Nations; *Educational Objectives; *Educational Philosophy; Elementary Secondary Education; Ethnocentrism; Foreign Countries; *Global Approach; Interdisciplinary Approach; International Education; *Multicultural Education; Rural Development; *World Problems
IDENTIFIERS *Development Education; *Great Britain

ABSTRACT

The document examines the relationships between multi-ethnic and development education in Great Britain. Multi-ethnic education, initially with a national focus, has a global dimension, and development education, initially with a global focus, has a national and even local dimension. A common interest in human diversity and human inequalities would seem to unite development and multi-ethnic education. Both approaches are engaged in helping the pupil to make sense of an essentially hierarchical world and have adopted a cross-curriculum strategy of education. Were it not for the importance of the concept of "self-image" within multi-ethnic education, its aims would be happily complementary with those of development education. From a multi-ethnic viewpoint, development education is criticized for: inculcating or reinforcing attitudes of white Western superiority; for damaging the self-image of the black or brown child within Western society; for its preoccupation with poverty, disasters, and catastrophes; and for being more successful in formulating questions than in devising solutions. However, it appears that a complete accommodation of multi-ethnic sensitivities would necessarily eliminate the welfare focus of development education. Such a strategy would constitute a futile attempt to disguise the real nature of the contemporary world and could only reinforce complacency. (NEC)

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DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

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Development Education Paper No. 21

ED212412

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND MULTI-ETHNIC EDUCATION: SOME TENSIONS

Michael Storm

1981

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1. THE AIMS OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Discussions of development education are customarily clouded by the fact that support for the aims of development education can be generated ahead of any real clarification of those aims. Lack of clarity in defining aims in turn contributes towards uncertainties about content and evaluation. Divergent interpretation of the aims of development education can easily be identified. Spatially, the emphasis ranges from global concerns through national and local communities to individual, personal interpretation of "development" in terms of commitment and spiritual growth. Temporally, there may be a preoccupation with contemporary issues, a preference for historical overviews, or a fixation on futurologies. In practice, it may be that the most significant characterization of the various forms of development education would be in terms of the relative emphasis given to cognitive and affective objectives.

Common cognitive objectives would include an understanding of centrally important processes of change in world society, notably demographic (population growth, cityward migration) and political (from intra-national tensions to supra-national linkages). An awareness of the various dimensions of interdependence would also rank high among the cognitive objectives of development education. For instance, a forthcoming (Spring 1982) B.B.C. television series for

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RC013144

10-12 year old pupils ("One World") will deal with the movements of people and commodities between Britain and the Caribbean, the causes of such movements and the constraints affecting them. 1 The intellectual challenge of development education would normally also embrace definitions of development and the categorization of states and economies. For instance, it seems to be becoming rarer for the mapping of the world according to G.N.P. per caput to be unaccompanied by a critique of the validity of G.N.P. as an index. Composite measures such as the Physical Quality of Life Index place more emphasis upon components, such as health and literacy, that are independent of price and market value considerations. "By minimizing the developmental and cultural ethnocentricities that bedevil most other measures, the P.Q.L.I. facilitates international and regional comparisons." 2 It seems to me that this sort of analysis, appropriately mediated for the ages and abilities of students, should become a central concern for development education.

But for many the main thrust of development education is in the affective domain, the area of personal attitudes and values. Primarily, the development education effort is fuelled by a sense of moral outrage deriving from the world's demonstrable inequalities and injustices. This concern, in both teachers and taught, owes much more to the informal influences of TV, radio, newspapers and the aid agencies than to any institutionalized programmes of study. Such programmes generally recognize this moral imperative by listing affective objectives such as empathy: the development of an ability to envisage the situation of others and to identify with them, whether Bolivian tin miners or Indian landless labourers. To this end, graphic, literary and film material, and the eliciting of personal verbal and written responses, would complement if not replace the study of data and the analysis of international linkages. Affective objectives commonly include an enhancing of the pupil's awareness of the shortcomings of his own society and the fostering of a disposition towards active participation. This is of course exaggerating the distinctiveness of these cognitive and affective rationales. In any well-conceived development education enterprise they must necessarily be complementary: understanding leading to concern, concern remaining fragile without understanding. Nevertheless, I would argue that in the schools, development education initiatives can generally be located along this affective-cognitive spectrum.

If we move away from the small, incestuous and somewhat feverish world of development education theory, and observe actual classroom practice (which in turn produces external assumptions about the nature of development education), it is possible to discern certain undisputed core elements. Development education is seen to be essentially <u>global</u> in its concerns, to be especially concerned with processes of <u>change</u>, and to be triggered by a concern for those spatial variations in levels of human well-being (however defined) that also form its principal subject-content. Strategically, development education is perceived as a cross-curriculum policy, rather than an intrusive subject-category.

2. THE AIMS OF MULTI-ETHNIC EDUCATION

There is a similar lack of clarity or agreement about the aims of multi-ethnic education, perhaps best exemplified by the parallel use of the alternative terms "multi-racial education" and "multi-cultural education". One need only cite the central, continuing debate over "relevance". Is multi-ethnic education a strategy to make the curriculum more relevant to the minority culture by incorporating elements of it? Or is it to make the curriculum more relevant to the minority pupil's ultimate social and economic survival in the mainstream culture? Of course, these two versions of "relevance" should not be seen as mutually exclusive. "Ideally the school should transmit to ethnic minority children effective and cultural skills which enable them to cope successfully in the wider society. But at the same time the school should transmit to all the ethnic groups in the multicultural school...an intimate knowledge of, and a magnanimous pride in, the language and culture of their traditional society". 3 Nevertheless, the two concepts of relevance <u>are</u> often perceived as contradictory and have even embodied alternative institutional responses. "While schools try to compensate children by offering Black Studies and steel bands, black parents and community groups are organizing Saturday school - to supplement the second-rate education which the school system offers their children." 4

However, as with development education, it is possible to list some widely accepted objectives - both cognitive and affective. Amongst the former, multi-ethnic education would seek to develop an understanding of the plural nature of British society, of its ethnic and cultural diversity, of how minorities came to be here, of their economic contribution. Often such studies would be set within a context stressing the spatial and temporal universality of human movements in response to local hardship and/or distant opportunity. The development of a demographically accurate model of contemporary British society is rendered more imperative by the irresponsible and inflammatory language used by leading politicians; the Prime Minister has employed the extraordinarily unhelpful "swamping" metaphor. (This generates a critical dilemma for multi-ethnic education. Since demographic data - especially increase rates - are the stock-in-trade of racist abuse, the educator feels compelled to provide a more balanced and accurate factual context. Yet the very process of refutation can unintentionally appear to be endorsing an essentially pathological - "more means worse" - view of ethnic minorities.)

The affective objectives of multi-ethnic education are much better documented. These would include the inculcation of respect for other cultures; the replacement of contempt by curiosity about other life-styles - foods, family patterns, dress, religious beliefs. Another objective would be the development of a resistance to pejorative stereotyping - the allocation of unattractive attributes to entire communities.- and the rejection of racist scapegoating (the adoption of simplistic analyses that attempt to explain all social and economic ills in terms of the presence of ethnic minorities).

These are self-evidently the most urgent priorities for multi-ethnic education. There is, however, more agreement about the aims than about the

means of attaining them. Thus far, direct teaching to refute racist propaganda has been less favoured than a somewhat more oblique approach involving the assiduous combing of published teaching materials for signs of "ethnocentricity".

An important concept within multi-ethnic education is the "self-image". We are not merely concerned with how children see other groups within society, but also how they see themselves. This notion derives its centrality from a recognition that many black pupils were not performing well in our schools, combined with research which seemed to demonstrate that many such children had a very low or negative self-image, seeing themselves as failures, as inferior, and thus becoming non-achievers. 5 This argument has recently been vigorously challenged, but it nevertheless influences much of the thinking within multi-ethnic education. It is, as may herein be demonstrated, at the centre of the tangled relationships between multi-ethnic and development education. Indeed, were it not for this concept of self-image, the aims of development education would seem to be happily complementary to the aims of multi-ethnic education as seen by those allocating resources to it: the avoidance of racial conflict and the facilitation of educational attainment by young people from ethnic minorities.

3. AREAS OF CONVERGENCE

The convergence of the two areas of concern is neatly expressed in a recent curriculum statement from Britain's Department of Education and Science. "Our society is a multicultural, multiracial one, and the curriculum should reflect a sympathetic understanding of the different cultures and races that now make up our society. We also live in a complex, interdependent world, and many of our problems in Britain require international solutions. The curriculum should therefore reflect our need to know about and understand other countries." 7 A common interest in human diversity and human inequalities would seem to unite development and multi-ethnic education. Development education must necessarily be concerned with ethnic minorities within "developed" societies; from a development education perspective such communities represent a human response (migration) to global welfare gradients. From the multi-ethnic education viewpoint, it has long been apparent that attitudes towards minorities within Britain cannot be divorced from the mental maps of the world possessed by indigenous Britons. Most recently a report commissioned by the British Ministry of Overseas Development confirmed a relationship between largely negative views of the Third World and basically hostile attitudes towards "immigrants". 8 This takes us into the all-important area of diagnosis. An awareness of general global inequalities develops very early, quite independently of any "inputs" from formal education. "At seven or eight, children already have ideas about other countries and have often formed strong preferences and dislikes. Although they would not necessarily be able to articulate it, their world-view generally incorporates an awareness of the fact that there are spectacular variations in the levels of human welfare around the globe. Though it may be perceived through a fog of ignorance and misunderstanding, the basic fact that there are rich nations and poor nations is grasped early." 9 Furthermore, it can be argued that there exists a universal inclination to try to formulate an explanation for this state of affairs. Attempts at diagnosis whether or not

aided by formal education, may include environmental and demographic factors but also usually invoke envisaged human characteristics - reckless over-breeding, laziness, lack of intelligence, general moral turpitude. Thus the early observation of the rich world/poor world gap, and the generally unaided construction of a diagnosis to explain it, is, one may say, central to the evolution of racist attitudes.

Both approaches are engaged in helping the pupil to make sense of an essentially hierarchical world. Development education describes such a world, attempts to explain it, discusses what might be done about it. The Brandt Report urges us to "pay more attention to international problems so that young people will see more clearly the dangers they are facing." 10 Multi-ethnic education's approach to a hierarchical world is rather different. Essentially, it seeks ways to sever the connection between perceptions of an unequal world and assumptions about ethnic and cultural attributes - whether these generate "Eurocentric" arrogance or black "negative self-images". Unsurprisingly, the most commonly-adopted devices for altering the Brandtian rich-poor, North-South world-view tend to challenge the categorization itself. To take one instance out of many: the University of London Advanced Level General Certificate of Education Geography Examination (taken at 18) until 1980 contained a paper in which the questions were grouped into those on the Developed World and those on the Developing World. This categorization has, apparently, been found to be tendentious and offensive by teachers and candidates at home and overseas and is being replaced by a simple listing of (the same) regions.

Before concluding this review of areas of convergence between multi-ethnic and development education, it is worth noting that both initiatives have preferred the adoption of a cross-curriculum strategy to the investment of effort in attempts to establish a newly-defined academic subject area. It might also be worth noting that the term "cross-curriculum" is possibly somewhat euphemistic. Though pupils may learn about the Arabic contribution to mathematics, and the design and technology course may look at intermediate technology, the main target areas for both development and multi-ethnic education remain history, geography, social studies, religious education and English.

4. AREAS OF CONTRAST

Turning from areas of convergence to points of contrast, one can observe that "if the recording and analysis of 'the geography of welfare' is an important part of development education, then although the phrase may be relatively new, the enterprise currently known as 'development education' has been around for centuries, if not millennia". 11 I remember as a student being influenced by an iconoclastic lecture on "the Have and Have-Not Countries" given by the economist Colin Clark. He explored the area of "diagnosis" - "the varying natural resources of different countries are often stressed by geography books. Nothing could be more wide off the mark as an explanation of the difference between countries in wealth and income." His conclusions, in 1953, sound depressingly familiar in 1981: "One does not have to be either a historian or a diplomat to be aware of the steadily rising tide of resentment, on the part of the majority of the world's citizens, against the wealth and

power of the West and against our indifference to the economic and political development of the rest of the world." 12 The evolution of Britain's Centre for World Development Education would provide a good case-study of the growth of interest in development education since the 1960s. Starting in the mid-1960s as a small voluntary committee collating and distributing educational materials produced by the various charitable aid agencies, it has evolved into a major source of resources and expertise for teachers, with a professional staff, a significant publishing function and (currently) a subsidy from central government. The emergence of multi-ethnic education, as evidenced in publications, research projects, curriculum development schemes and advisory appointments, has been much more recent, gathering momentum through the late 1970s. Triggered by concern about the low educational attainments of the children of immigrants from the West Indies, and concern for social stability, there has been a much more substantial investment of resources in multi-ethnic education than in development education, where central government financial support was largely terminated in 1979. In Inner London alone over fifty educators are employed full-time in advisory or curriculum development roles.

Predictably this relatively sudden emergence of the "multi-ethnic specialist" has attracted some scepticism, if not hostility: "Unfortunately for all of us, whatever our colour, there are people in some areas for whom race is their bread and butter, their ladder for political and professional careers. Such people make one wonder if the letters RACE have nothing to do with race at all but actually stand for the Racket for the Advancement of Career Enthusiasts." 13 More recently the black Briton poet, Linton Kwesi Johnson, has been more dismissive: "Change can never come from teachers, or these multi-cultural ideas, the C.R.E. or the Afro-Caribbean Education Resource Project. They're just project hatchers who shout racist to get middle-class jobs." 14

The close correlation between the map of multi-ethnic education initiatives and the map of the distribution of ethnic minorities is understandable, yet regrettable. It is just as important for children in "the White Highlands" of the Home Counties to understand Britain's plural society as it is for those living in the cities. Effort in development education is much more evenly spread, with some evidence of a reversal of the pattern, it being perhaps easier to interest the secure sons and daughters of bank managers in the problems of the Third World than it is to involve the inner-city teenager facing unemployment. It is this latter difficulty that is forcing development education to abandon any exclusively global preoccupations in which problems are invariably located "out there". 15 Multi-ethnic education might be characterized as moving in the opposite direction; starting from urgent domestic concerns, it is increasingly recognizing the relevance of the global dimension. "Thus whilst multi-ethnic education, initially with a national focus, also has a global dimension, so development education, initially with a global focus, also has a national and even local dimension." 16

5. AREAS OF TENSION: THE MULTI-ETHNIC CRITIQUE OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION

Actual and potential conflict between the aims of development education and multi-ethnic education seems to have been first identified in a seminal

article by Mary Worrall. 17 She observes that "at the level of practical classroom innovation...it sometimes seems as though these two pressure groups are riding horses going in opposite directions: the first emphasizing the achievements of other cultures and ethnic groups, the second stressing the poverty and disadvantage of the Third World poor". Contrasts in selected curriculum content reflect the motivation of the teacher. "Multi-ethnic" projects on India, for instance, will tend to present "an idealised view of traditional family life, embedded in an aura of myth and legend and fine fabrics". The development education lobby makes a very different selection: "many teachers have chosen to focus on malnutrition, disease, drought, flood, famine and homelessness... Asians and Africans are seen almost solely as victims and recipients." Mary Worrall argues that the latter emphasis is far more powerful, since it is daily reinforced by the media and corresponds with children's existing perceptions, as revealed in many surveys. 18 This essentially pathological view of the Third World is seen as distinctly unhelpful to the cause of multiracial harmony: "It seems clear that the image of the primitive, disaster-prone native is related to anti-black feeling in Britain... Neglect or pervasive devaluation of the history and culture of Afro-Caribbean and Asian people can damage the sense of identity and self-esteem of children from the British minority groups." An over-zealous compensatory strategy is, however, counter-productive: "The reaction of white middle school children in a London borough with a high proportion of Punja Sikhs to a project weighted in favour of successful modern developments in India was 'So if it's so marvellous, why don't they go back?'"

Mary Worrall's "solution" is to preface any Third World studies with a substantial examination ot the social and environmental deficiencies of the children's own locality. "Rather than introducing children in Western countries to the supposed deficiencies and needs of people of whose culture they as yet know nothing, we could start with a questioning and analysing process near home. When studies of the Third World are eventually undertaken, they should not only incorporate neglected elements of explanation (e.g. land tenure, the co-existence of export cash crops and local malnutrition) but be firmly based upon a critical awareness of the deficiencies of one's own society; "perhaps the just question to pose is: 'Why should we ever have thought that other people would want to be more like us?'"

There have been other recent indictments of development education. For instance, J.F. Porter, who is Director of the Commonwealth Institute, has argued that "the development approach...seems to have deepened the negative image of Asia and Africa as places beset by the most extreme problems. Despite the use of such words as 'development' and 'developing', the dominant impression is that such continents have intractable problems." 19 Porter believes that consideration of any fundamental restructuring of the economic relationship between North and South is "beyond the scope of the age ranges of children who have normally been the target for development materials" and that we should therefore emphasise "the more attractive features of some of the societies from which minority ethnic groups derive".

Development education is thus criticised for inculcating or reinforcing attitudes of white Western superiority; for damaging the self-image of the black or brown child within Western society; and above all, for its

preoccupation with poverty, with disasters and catastrophes. Indeed it is when development education's "moral imperative" is most in evidence that multi-ethnic specialists become most uneasy (whilst the posters and newspaper advertisements of the aid agencies - "Save This Child" etc. - are presumably constant irritants).

6. THE AREA OF DIAGNOSIS

The critique outlined above is formulated in terms of the descriptive content of development education, of the picture of the world being presented. But development education materials and teaching techniques are never free of an element of diagnosis, implicit or explicit. In other words we are rarely content to describe the geography of welfare without also attempting to explain it. The selection of material is often related to the particular sorts of explanations of poverty favoured by the teacher. Despite the risk of extreme over-simplification, it can be helpful to distinguish three broad categories of analysis, all in evidence within development education. An attempt at summarising these appears in the accompanying table. See Table 1.

TABLE 1.

DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONTENT SELECTED AND PREFERRED DIAGNOSIS

	"Motivation"	"Entry point"	"Diagnoses"	"Scenario"	"Teaching hazards"
A	Concern; compassion. Need to understand current events. Support aid movements.	Establishing the nature of the North-South gap using range of welfare measures (NGP, diet, infant mortality etc.). Less likely to include studies of Britain?	Emphasis upon environmental constraints - climate, soil, resources, location, etc. Emphasis upon population (density, increase rates, age-structure).	Development necessarily involving urban/industrial growth. North-South trade/and linkages centrally important. Interdependence.	Reinforces attitudes of racial/cultural superiority? Despair/indifference (since environmental constraints immutable).
B	Anger, resentment of injustice. Need to radicalise. Support 3W revolutionary movements.	Establishing the nature of the North-South gap using range of welfare measures (including inequalities within 3W states). More likely to include studies of Britain?	Emphasis upon political and economic constraints - lack of development caused by development elsewhere. Emphasis upon colonial and neo-colonial relations, activities of multi-national companies.	Development necessarily involving urban/industrial growth. Only possible by severing North-South trade/and linkages which essentially impede development. Self-sufficiency.	Counter-productive? (as burden of collective guilt rejected).
C	Anger at attitudes of racial superiority. Interest in other cultures, arts, religions. Venerations of 'pastoral'.	Challenges use of terms 'development', 'Third World', and measures of 'poverty'. So-called 'under-development' really cultural diversity. Emphasis on inadequacies of own society.	Diagnosis not really necessary since 'world poverty' really an illusory ethnocentric perception.	Development does not/must not involve urban/industrial growth. West needs to learn from 3W to rediscover human values. 'Small Is Beautiful', 'Blueprint for Survival', etc.	Complacency about South conditions? Lack of correspondence with actual aspirations of 3W peoples?

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Positions "A" and "B" are very different. "A" tends to formulate explanations of poverty in terms of the current internal situation of the country concerned, with little reference to its historical experience or external linkages. Future development is seen in Brandtian terms of increasing and mutually beneficial interdependence. "B" sees poverty as essentially created by past and current external factors, and emphasises these accordingly. "B" envisages the reduction of linkages if "genuine" development, i.e. self-sufficiency, is to be attained. The different positions not infrequently influence the exemplar territories selected for study. "A" might select Kenya or Malaysia, "B" would possibly be more likely to examine Tanzania or (until recently?) China.

Nevertheless neither position integrates easily with the objectives of multi-ethnic education, since each bases its approach upon the recognition of an essentially hierarchical world, with developing countries aspiring to "modernise", to "close the gap", and so on. In both scenarios, industrial and urban development is seen as inevitable and desirable - to deal with rural over-population and under-employment ("A"), to end dependence on Western suppliers and markets ("B") - in either case, to raise living standards (which is also the preoccupation of most Third World politicians).

TABLE 2. The Nordic Alternative Group's debatable comparison of traditional and industrial lifestyles.

APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY	versus	HIGH TECHNOLOGY
1. Traditional, decentralized society, perhaps in West Africa:		2. Industrialized, consumer society, perhaps in northern Europe:
Technology appropriate to circumstances uses local resources for basic needs of people		Technology high, expensive and specialized creates mostly meaningless, often harmful products such as military equipment, Concorde aeroplanes, electric toothbrushes, Volvo 264 ... wants to increase production of above items cares nothing for basic needs of people
Basic needs food, shelter, education, medical care, social and cultural services for human beings		Basic needs growth of established industrial structure energy and raw material for machines
Role of man social, creative, participating in all activities		Role of man consumer, excessive consumption gives status exchangeable in all aspects - in work, in love no lasting human relationships, friendships changed into exploitation
Identity of man collective		Identity of man individual
Children, adults integrated, participating parts of society		Children not needed Old people sent to institutions
Waste none, re-use and re-cycling		Waste created at increasing rate the art of decreasing the lifespan of a product by scientific means is applied everywhere
Ecology all activities obey ecological laws		Ecology neither known, asked for, nor cared about

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However, development education increasingly accommodates position "C". Central to this position is a critique of urban industrial society; indeed Third World societies are perhaps primarily seen as providing the raw material for the construction of such a critique. An excellent example of this approach is to be found in the report of a seminar organised by the Nordic Alternative Group in Buea, Cameroon. 20 Their table, which is designed to demonstrate the superiority of Cameroonian lifestyles, is reproduced. See Table 2. Position "C", in which there is an emphasis upon the distinctiveness of cultures, and a related regret or castigation of the processes of change, not surprisingly avoids any friction between the objectives of multi-ethnic and development education.

7. PROBLEMS IN RECONCILING THE AIMS OF DEVELOPMENT EDUCATION AND MULTI-ETHNIC EDUCATION

The crudities and insensitivities of some classroom approaches in development education have been well documented. Yet the multi-ethnic critique can itself be worryingly facile. It must be conceded that the central problem is massively intractable. Mary Worrall writes of "the supposed deficiencies and needs" of Third World people; James Porter writes of "the negative image of Asia and Africa as places beset by the most extreme problems". It is almost as though development educationists were being accused of inventing world poverty in order to sabotage the work of those dedicated to multiracial harmony. But sadly we are not dealing with alleged deficiencies and unfortunately dismal impressions. We live in a world where about a quarter of all children die before the age of five and at least twenty percent of the people suffer from hunger and malnutrition. This is absolute, not relative, poverty. We cannot escape into some comfortable form of cultural relativism. The survival of infants, the desire for a longer rather than a shorter life, for health rather than disease and hunger - these are universal preferences. The facts about world poverty may be regrettable, irritating, inconvenient - or even boring - but they are, nevertheless, facts. A lecturer in multi-cultural studies recently described the central problem very succinctly: "the real bugbear of multi-cultural education is the undeniable fact that at the moment most parts of Asia and Africa happen to be poorer than Britain. What does one do about this fact?" 21 The writer goes on to identify two common strategies: "Some well-meaning teachers, not prepared to accept that poorer may not mean inferior, attempt to solve this problem by stressing class differences, emphasizing that there are rich and professional Africans and Asians who, in style and clothing, are 'just like us', just as 'successful' that is." This clearly still involves an essentially hierarchical world view. The alternative strategy observed by Mary Chatterjee involves an emphasis on the exotic, "the total 'otherness', the mythical 'non-material' quality of minority group cultures". Neither approach gets very close to multi-ethnic education's nirvana: the elimination of ethnocentricity. It is hard to translate Mary Chatterjee's preferred solution, "the ability to learn from individuals, groups or societies poorer than ourselves", into classroom reality. Inter-community learning seems more often to follow economic gradients and to correspond more closely with Paul Scott's acid characterisation of the English liberal intellectual in India: "underneath the admiration and sympathy, there was the contempt a people feel for a people who have learned things from them". 22

A metropolitan instance of Mary Chatterjee's second strategy - idealisation of the exotic - would be the study of Rastafarianism. This is a millenarian cult, involving the rejection of "Babylon" (white urban industrial society and its values), a day of judgment, deliverance by a reincarnated Haile Selassie and actual or allegorical movement to a promised land, Ethiopia. This religion, with its associated music, language, dress and life style, has a strong attraction for disaffected youth from West Indian families. There have been attempts, in the interests of "relevance", to incorporate the study of Rastafarianism in the curriculum. Such efforts were recently analysed by Chris Searle, a radical and widely-travelled teacher of English. "We must be the enemies of obscurantism as well as of racism, therefore presumably we should want to challenge the encouragement of Rastafarian ideas... One of the problems we're facing in British schools is that teachers are afraid to challenge any culture which is non-English because they feel that somehow they are trespassing... We know that these children who are affected by Rasta ideas have heard of Africa. It looms large in their minds - but as a mystical force. They respond very strongly to the idea of Ethiopia - but the majority of them don't know what is happening there. All most of them know is Ethiopia as a mystical image. Teachers know that this notion of Ethiopia is not correct. Are we supposed to keep quiet because we feel a sense of guilt? Or feel intimidated by mystical ideas which we know don't match up to reality? I think that we have to intervene as teachers, and tell our children that they are wrong."

Whilst most people working in development education would endorse Searle's affirmation that "any teaching that suggests that cultures find their dividing line in the colour of children's skins is not anti-racist", it may be that he is under-estimating the lure of the exotic for all members of the Western intelligentsia. "We should recognise that what may be loosely labelled the anti-development perspective has immensely deep and ramifying roots in our culture; as colonial administrators or travellers, we invariably preferred the austere and proudly traditional - the Bedouin, the Afghan, the Fulani, the Masai - and found those who became involved in cultural shifts - the "babu" Bengali, the entrepreneurial Ibo - less interesting if not distasteful." 24 In his important book Why Poor People Stay Poor, the development economist Michael Lipton argues that this anti-development position is in fact a projection into the Third World context of an ancient and entrenched Western literary-pastoral tradition. He also reminds us that "the traditional village economy, society and polity are almost always internally unequal, exploitative and far from idyllic". 25

Another "multi-ethnic" strategy which has recently attracted criticism is an approach favoured by some history and geography teachers, which allocates Africans and Asians roles in which they appear exclusively as wronged and suffering victims. This strategy involves overlooking the complex power structures and interest conflicts within African and Asian societies - structures and conflicts which facilitated European penetration and control. It thus presents a version of history in which a handful of intrepid white men subjugate an entire sub-continent or capture millions of African slaves, encountering neither co-operation nor opposition. In its concern to award Europeans a world monopoly of rapaciousness, this strategy can actually be counter-productive, portraying the recipient cultures as essentially docile

and passive. "It is truly ironic that a body (multi-ethnic advisors) which keeps protesting about alleged Eurocentricity in our educational system should itself be Eurocentric by ignoring the role of Africans in the slave trade, both in East and West Africa." 26

Perhaps inevitably, multi-ethnic specialists often seem less interested in the close study of individual Third World societies. The literature of multi-ethnic education does not reveal a strong interest in the processes of change (e.g. urbanisation, land reform, agricultural change, and the tensions thus generated). "We must remember that the problems of the rural peasantry have been based fundamentally on their traditional outlook and unwillingness to accept change." 27 This sentiment, if expressed in a development education context would, very likely, generate uneasiness or annoyance in the multi-ethnic lobby. Yet it comes from a recent essay by a Tanzanian social scientist. Multi-ethnic education often seems to have relatively little contact with the literature of development studies.

In summarising the multi-ethnic analysis of development education, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that it has been more successful in formulating questions than in devising solutions. For instance, is it really practicable, as Mary Worrall suggests, somehow to <u>defer</u> "introducing" children to Third World problems, when at eleven they are already well aware of these problems, through the informal education provided by the media? We should also note that the multi-ethnic analysis rests squarely on certain linked assumptions. It is assumed that black British children automatically identify themselves with <u>any</u> black people - say Trobriand Islanders - encountered in teaching materials. It is assumed that the self-image of such pupils, already low, is damaged by such encounters. Both of these assumptions are, to say the least, arguable.

Of course development education needs to take account of the multi-ethnic critique. The policies of a group of geography teachers in a London secondary school will serve to illustrate the sort of progressive adjustment of course content and teaching style that has been taking place during the last few years. The school has a multi-ethnic clientele. Initially, the department responded by developing regional projects related to the envisaged "homelands" of the ethnic groups represented in the school; this was found to be unsatisfactory, if not counter-productive. The team then experimented with a topic approach, each unit consisting of a major world problem - population growth, food supplies, health, and so on. As the team leader explains, "It was thought that in-depth coverage would lead to appreciation and understanding." In practice it was found that "1. The pupils did not like dealing with problems all the time. 2. Geography was one of their least popular subjects. 3. Prejudices were seemingly reinforced by the work and not undermined. In fact, prejudice was given a forum." 28 Currently the emphasis is upon themes (farming, resources, settlement, industry) which draw upon material from both North and South and which demonstrate linkages. As with several other geography departments, the multi-ethnic context has prompted an "universalising" approach. A new study module on "<u>links</u>" contains a good illustration of this approach in an extended assignment booklet on migration which examines the basic phenomena of human movement and re-settlement (push/pull mechanisms, concentration/dispersal, etc.) in a variety of temporal

and spatial contexts. This team has also employed a "distancing" strategy: the subsistence farming case study employed concerns a "Mr. Leon of Ecuador" whose ethnic, social and cultural identity is free of any local resonance.

This process of thoughtful revision would seem to be characteristic of good practice in development education. Very serious attempts are being made to accomodate the concerns of multi-ethnic education. However, it does sometimes appear that a really complete accomodation of multi-ethnic sensitivities would necessarily eliminate the welfare focus of development studies. Such a strategy would constitute a futile attempt to disguise the real nature of the contemporary world and could only reinforce complacency in a period in which the Foreign Secretary has stated that under no circumstances can Britain be regarded as a rich country and the Prime Minister characterises North-South relationships in terms of "handouts". Elderly geography textbooks, after all, also portrayed a world without poverty, where all societies and economies were neatly and happily adjusted to their environments.

Of course, an elimination of the welfare focus of development education would not prevent our pupils from learning about the nature of the North-South divide. The public opinion survey already cited asked respondents to indicate their sources of knowledge about the problems of poorer countries. Only six per cent mentioned schools as a source, compared with sixty-six per cent who listed television. Nevertheless it would be regrettable if such learning were to be unaccompanied by any assistance from teachers.

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